

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 767
By Southerland

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Joseph Leslie "Joe"
Bewley of Greeneville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of our former colleague and friend, Joseph Leslie "Joe" Bewley, who so ably served the people of Greene and Cocke Counties as Tennessee State Representative from the 8th District for eight terms; and

WHEREAS, a direct descendant of Jacob Bewley, a State Senator in 1835 and close friend of and advisor to Andrew Johnson, Joe Bewley was born November 28, 1922 in Greene County to the late French Leslie and Mary Ayers Bewley; he graduated from Greeneville High School and attended Tusculum College and The Citadel, in Charleston South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, answering the call of his country to military service, Mr. Bewley enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps and served valiantly as a pilot during World War II; and

WHEREAS, following his military service, Joe Bewley returned to Greeneville to work for, and later to become the owner of, Bewley Chevrolet Company for the next 26 years; he served as president of the Greene County New Automobile Dealers Association and director of the Tennessee Automobile Dealers Association; and

WHEREAS, besides his love of hunting and fishing, Mr. Bewley's great passion was civilian aviation, and he was instrumental in the design, development, and building of the Greeneville Airport; this enthusiasm for flying led several of his family members to pursue careers in professional aviation; and

WHEREAS, Joe Bewley was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; he served as president of the Greeneville Chamber of Commerce, president of the Greeneville Rotary Club, chairman of the Greeneville-Greene County Airport Authority, member

of the Elk and Moose lodges, member of Greeneville Lodge #3, F&AM, and a member of the Republican Party. His first elective office was Greene County Water Commissioner; and

WHEREAS, on November 7, 1972, voters in Greene and Cocke Counties elected Mr. Bewley to the first of eight terms in the Tennessee House of Representatives; during his tenure he served astutely as a member of the Transportation, Conservation and Environment, and Finance, Ways and Means Committees, as well as the Fiscal Review Committee; and

WHEREAS, as a legislator, Joe Bewley was known for his ability to defuse tense moments by restoring good humor with a deft humorous remark; his sometimes pointed comments were delivered from a background of love and humanity, a sense of comradery, and a willingness to include himself within the target; and

WHEREAS, his physical stature, silver hair and penchant for song complimented an inner spirit of stability, generosity and kindness which endeared him to all members and staff of the General Assembly; to engage him in conversation was to experience his keen wit, warmth and humanity; and

WHEREAS, Joe Bewley was an active and devout member of the Asbury United Methodist Church, which he served faithfully for many years as Chairman of the Pastor-Parish Committee, Chairman of the Administrative Board, member of the Board of Trustees and president of the LaRue Bible Sunday School Class; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bewley was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Joe Bewley enjoyed the loving companionship of Letha "Boots" DeBusk Bewley, his wife of 58 years, and was the proud father of Joe Bewley, Jr. and his wife Vikki; Barbara Bewley Clanton and her husband Rad; Deborah Bewley Haun; Huldah Bewley; Robert Bewley and his wife Helena; and Glenn Bewley; in addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his sisters Mary Frank Thompson and Nell Bewley, and infant grandson, Joseph Alexander Bewley; and

WHEREAS, he will also be sorely missed by his grandchildren and their spouses Brian and Shelley Bewley, Brenton and Ashley Bozard, Letha Clanton, Cara Clanton and Debany Haun, Katherine Bewley, William Bewley, Michael Bewley, Jackson Bewley and Shannon Bewley; great grandchildren Emily Bewley, Olivia Bewley and Mary Clanton Bozard, his sister

Grace Eleanor Thompson; his sisters-in-law and brother-in-law Mrs. W.K. Ford and Mr. and Mrs. B.A. Evans; and several nieces and nephews; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bewley leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of our valued colleague and exceptional public servant, constant friend and exemplary human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Joseph Leslie "Joe" Bewley, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to his widow Letha "Boots" DeBusk Bewley and their family.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.